



A Contingency View of the Strategies of Sustainable Development and Disclosure: Study of ENR's Top 10 Contractors

Shih Ping Ho (1), Chong Yang Yu (1), and Yaowen Hsu (2)

(1) Dept. of Civil Engineering, National Taiwan University, (2) Dept. of International Business, National Taiwan University

More and more international firms in the A/E/C (Architecture/Engineering/ Construction) industries voluntarily invest in sustainable development and disclose their efforts publicly. Especially, the sustainable development efforts of the firms in Construction industry draw more attentions from the public, compared to that in A/E industries. There are various reporting systems in practice for reporting the performance of a firm's development on sustainability. The most well known reporting systems include Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), and the AA1000 Accountability Principal Standards. However, most of these reporting systems are very complicated in terms of the performance indices and the categories and subcategories of these indices. It is impossible and also unnecessary for a firm to be evaluated on all the indices. However, it is also not clear on what indices are more important for a firm than other indices and why. The more fundamental questions are "what sustainable development efforts contribute more to a particular firm's competitive advantages and why?" In this research, we studied the world's top 10 contractors in ENR (Engineering News Records). We analyzed how these contractors disclose their efforts and performance in sustainable development and, most importantly, why. Lastly, based on the insights obtained from the analysis, we developed a contingency view of sustainable development and disclosure strategies. This strategic framework can be further examined from the perspective of firms' competitive advantages and give implications to how a firm's top managers should implement the firm's sustainable development program.